



# Patterns 1978

St. Clair County Community College



# PATTERNS '78

A Publication of  
St. Clair County Community College  
Port Huron, Michigan

## Preface

Creativity is very much alive at SCCCC and the twentieth year's publication of **Patterns** is proof. That there is no stereotype among the students here is evidenced by the variety of forms their thinking takes. We are proud of those published here and proud of all those who submitted entries. Choice was difficult, as it should be, when learning's best tool, imagination, thrives.

### COMMITTEE

#### Writing

Eleanor Mathews

Richard Colwell

Susanna Defever

Gail Johnson

Donald Haines

#### Art

Patrick Bourke

Jack Hennesey

Earl Robinette

Daniel Pelavin

Dale Northup



# DEDICATION

Each year PATTERNS presents and honors the emerging richness of creative student expression. This year it also honors the rewarding achievement of two of the most gracious and intelligent women on the English faculty, Mrs. Ruby Clemons and Mrs. Eleanor Mathews.

Each, in her own significant style of teaching, has reached out to touch the lives of students and colleagues. With wisdom and wit, with commitment and concern, they have shared their love for the beauty of language and the truth of literature with others. They have influenced many in the unique enrichment of learning and inspired them to a deeper awareness of living.

When this college was Port Huron J.C., Mrs. Clemons, then a busy wife and mother, began her studies. With her keen preception and her determination to succeed, she proved to be one of J.C.'s finest honor students. After completing her education at Wayne State University, she returned to Port Huron as a faculty member, whose special distinction has been in the classics, from the ancient Greeks to such moderns as Faulkner. Her interest in mythology and folklore included the myth-making of J.R.R. Tolkien and her own excellent studies on the folklore of the Great Lakes. Her classes in English literature, drama, and the short story have given students both challenge and delight.

With a respect for her students and a reverence for life, Mrs. Eleanor Mathews has consistently encouraged her classes to seek a more sensitive and appreciative response to learning. Her talent extends beyond the classroom to the writing and publishing of poetry. (She has attended numerous seminars on writing and this summer will conduct one on writing poetry in the beautiful Smokey Mountains.) Her belief in helping others to see more fully led her to giving of her time and skills to reading books on tape for the blind. Mrs. Mathews, a graduate of the University of Michigan and Wayne State University, has inspired her students in such classes as Creative Writing, Contemporary Poetry, and the Modern Novel to be more cognizant of the effectiveness of using language well and more conscious of the dignity and frailty of being human. In all her classes, from English 101 to more advanced studies, she teaches with distinction and charm.

It is with great admiration and deep respect, tinged with a note of sadness at their retirement, that this issue of PATTERNS is dedicated to Ruby Clemons and Eleanor Mathews. Their teaching uniquely enriched our individual patterns for human expression.





**Mrs. Ruby Clemons and Mrs. Eleanor Mathews**

# Table of Contents

## CRITICAL ESSAY

First Prize ..... **The Circle Is a Closed Figure** ..... Stephen W. Strobbe

## SHORT STORY

First Prize ..... **There Ain't Many Cowboys Left** ..... Ricky D. Mitchell

## POETRY

First Prize ..... **An Important Spoke** ..... Stephen W. Strobbe

## ART

First Prize ..... **Figure Study** ..... Lonnie Gross

Second Prize ..... **Pencil Drawing** ..... Michael Pitzer

Third Place ..... **Mechanical Secretariat (silk screen)** ..... Kathy Wise

First Honorable Mention .... **Clown Lithograph** .... Mary Kay Schwanitz

Second Honorable Mention ..... **Figure Study** ..... George Richmond

## SELECTED ENTRIES

### CRITICAL ESSAYS

Of Life and Dying ..... Judy Williams

### SHORT STORY

Another Autumn ..... Tamara Francisco

### POETRY

If I Could Open Up ..... Stephen W. Strobbe

Sweeping Generalizations ..... Stephen W. Strobbe

The Issue ..... Stephen W. Strobbe

Baker's Dozen ..... Stephen W. Strobbe

Giving Old Man Winter . . . . . Robin White

Behind the Scenes ..... Eric Malooley

Blown Away ..... Eric Malooley

"For-Real" Feelings ..... Charles Ross

Folk Dreamin' ..... J. A. Montgomery

Brother Larr ..... J. A. Montgomery

Waterways ..... Jane Grosor

The Acolyte ..... Ann Endelman

Make Believe Lives ..... Tamara Francisco

Three Boys Were Watching ..... John Van Deusen

Haikus ..... Pat Francesconi

## ESSAYS

Cyril — Not Me .....	Maureen Rowark
Just a Dumb Machine .....	Steve Lambert
What Makes a Good Teacher .....	Carlos Patrón
Chaotic Peace .....	Sandra Faust
Energy Tune-Up .....	Tom Lees
English as a Foreign Language .....	Vida Bonacci
On Being Harvested .....	Nancy Gates

## ART

Still Life .....	Deborah Ings
Head Study .....	Salli Alban
Figure Study .....	Kathy Wise
Farm .....	Kathy Wise
Jack-O-Lantern .....	Cheryl Blake
"Ray" Head Study .....	Chris Bookman
Ink Study (Back Cover) .....	Ted Wynne-Jones
Lithograph .....	Lonnie Gross
Pencil Drawing .....	Lonnie Gross
Still Life .....	Geralin Rhein
Woodcut Cat .....	Jyl Scott
Ink Drawing .....	Margaret Albert
Ink Drawing .....	Kitti Brown
Windmills .....	Ted Wynne-Jones
Studio Interior .....	Irene Murphy
Drawing .....	P. M. Barrett
Photograph (Front Cover) .....	Maureen Rowark





Untitled

Lonnie Gross

# The Circle Is A Closed Figure

By

Stephen W. Strobbe

Perception is of two kinds. The first lies in the realm of the senses: the concrete, the observable, the recognizable. Based on sensory stimulation, it is the raw stuff from which knowledge and logical thought are derived. The second deals with the abstract, the ideal and visionary. To form a reasonably sound view of the world, the healthy individual might strive to integrate the most desirable qualities from each of these two levels of perception, sensory and abstract. To exist exclusively in either perceptual realm is delusional, and the effects can be devastating. Witness **The Tragic History of the Life and Death of Doctor Faustus**. Faust's story is one of tragic short-sightedness and eventual damnation resulting from an obsessive need for sensory gratification and a lack of visionary imagination.

Faust's dilemma is clearly established in the drama's first soliloquy as the scholar cynically laments the ungratifying limitations of logic, philosophy, law, and theology. "Affords this art no greater miracle?" asks Faustus, who has reached that high plateau of human reason and is unsatisfied. Faustus wishes to know more, to know all, even if it be fruit from a forbidden tree. Ravenous in his pursuit of knowledge, Faust reveals his aspirations, dangerously ambitious, blasphemous, potentially damning:

Couldst thou make men to live eternally  
Or, being dead, raise them to life again,  
Then this profession were to be esteemed. (I, 1, 24-26)

Disillusioned, Faust bitterly abandons the divinities as being vague, ambiguous and unresolved, to pursue instead, studies which he sees as more substantial: the infamous art of necromancy, black magic.

Faust's dark decision to resort to demonic magic reveals at once his attitudes toward both perceptual realms, exposing a gaping abyss between them. Unable to believe in anything beyond the senses, the tragic intellectual acknowledges and seeks only that which can be seen, heard, smelled, touched or tasted. In doing so, Faust, with eyes in a direction other than upward, deprives himself of the ideal, in this case Christ, salvation, and the eventual, eternal bliss of heaven. Guided by faulty perception, Faustus seeks his own god:

Divinity, adieu!

These metaphysics of magicians  
And necromantic books are heavenly:  
Lines, circles, signs, letters, and characters—  
Aye, these are those that Faustus most desires. (I, 1, 48-52)  
A sound magician is a demigod:  
Here tire my brains to gain a deity! (I, 1, 62-63)

Even before having gained that power, Faust's appetite is whetted by its promise. Already one can see that he intends to feed his senses at the expense of his soul.



How I am glutted with conceit of this!  
Shall I make spirits fetch me what I please, (I, 1, 79-80)  
I'll have them fly to India for gold,  
Ransack the ocean for orient pearl,  
And search all corners of the new-found world  
For pleasant fruits and princely delicates (I, 1, 83-86)

He talks of silk and coin and land and reigning sole king of all the provinces.  
Faust knows of and desires all of these, and so he conjures Mephistophilis.

The dramatic appearance of Mephistophilis is crucial to shaping Faust's attitudes. Even though Faust's conjuring was not the cause (Mephistophilis appeared outside the drawn circle), the response reinforced his lust for immediate gratification and put a credence in magic which he had never known in his studies of the divinities. Never did Christ appear before Faustus, yet this first time, Mephistophilis does.

To determine which of Faust's tragic **symptoms** of short-sightedness bore the other would be as **circular** as the figures he draws on the ground to conjure spirits, and is not the issue here. What is important is how interdependent they truly are, and how each condition constantly feeds the other. Never is this relationship more prevalent than in Act II, scene 1. Here, Mephistophilis seals that frighteningly real contract for Faust's soul with the man's blood while they discuss two absolute abstracts, heaven and hell, neither of which poor Faustus can accept.

Thinkst thou that Faustus is so fond to imagine  
That after this life there is any pain?  
No, these are trifles and mere old wives' tales.

(II, 1, 132-134)

One would think the very existence of a Good Angel and a Bad Angel might be some indication of something beyond the here and now. Yet, neither of these, nor even Mephistophilis himself, can convince Faustus that there is any world other than the hard one beneath his feet. Oddly enough, Faustus has a point, for Mephistophilis cannot show him Hell as a place at all removed or any different from the world in which he now resides. Faust has no physical proof, only the words of spirits. Such evidence would be strictly inadmissible as hearsay to any court, including that of Faust's mind. Faustus makes his decision and courts heresy instead.

G.ANG. Sweet Faustus, think of heaven and heavenly things.  
B.ANG. No, Faustus, think of honor and of wealth.  
FAUST. Of Wealth! (II,1,21-23)

Indeed, the God Faust serves is his own appetite, and from this point forth, should he ever be in danger of repentance, the distraction of his senses will save his soul for Lucifer.

So, even when Faustus sees the words "Homo fuge!" ("O man, flee!") written on his arm, a devil's dance is enough to delight his mind, dissolve discomfort, and convince him that his senses, those senses he so ardently worships, were deceived. In fact, it is Faustus who is deceived, believing everything to be as temporal as joy. When pleas of the Good Angel almost capture Faust's ears, "Never too late, if Faustus will repent" (II, 2, 80), Lucifer



himself appears and has the Seven Deadly Sins parade before those eyes so blinded by the brilliance of novel power. "O how this sight doth delight my soul!" (II, 2, 165).

So shaded, now, are his judgment and imagination, Faustus will use his own powers to no greater end, and much less creatively. Invisible, Faust harasses, harangues, and ridicules the Pope and those around him in just the ways Mephistophilis suggests. In accordance with the wishes of others, Faustus brings forth the shadows of Alexander and later Helen of Greece. He is satisfied to see likenesses of those known for greatness, instead of using his power to do great and worthy acts himself. A single, selfish, symbolic line dynamically expresses Faust's attitude that pleasure, even if demonic, is devine: "Sweet Helen, make me immortal with a kiss." (V. 1, 100)

Though Faustus, at his death, may even recognize his need for the Christ ideal, he clings, to the very end, to his mortal senses and the body which has been their vehicle. When asked by fellow scholars why he did not share his tragic dilemma that they might have prayed for him, Faustus says only that the devil threatened to tear his flesh to pieces, an undeniably weak argument from one who faces an eternal punishment. Down to his last, desperate hour, Faust speaks as if Christ Himself would have to give some precious, physical sign to save that damned soul which will not, hence, can not believe.

See, see, where Christ's blood streams in the firmament!—

One drop would save my soul—half a drop! ah, my Christ!

(V, 2, 144-145)

Yet Faustus will not accept Christ of his own mind. At last, those insatiable senses of the gluttoned one are overwhelmed, and it is too late.

FAUST. O, I have seen enough to torture me.

B.ANG. Nay, thou must feel them, taste the smart of all;

He that loves pleasure must for pleasure fall.

(V,2,126-128)

#### FOOTNOTES

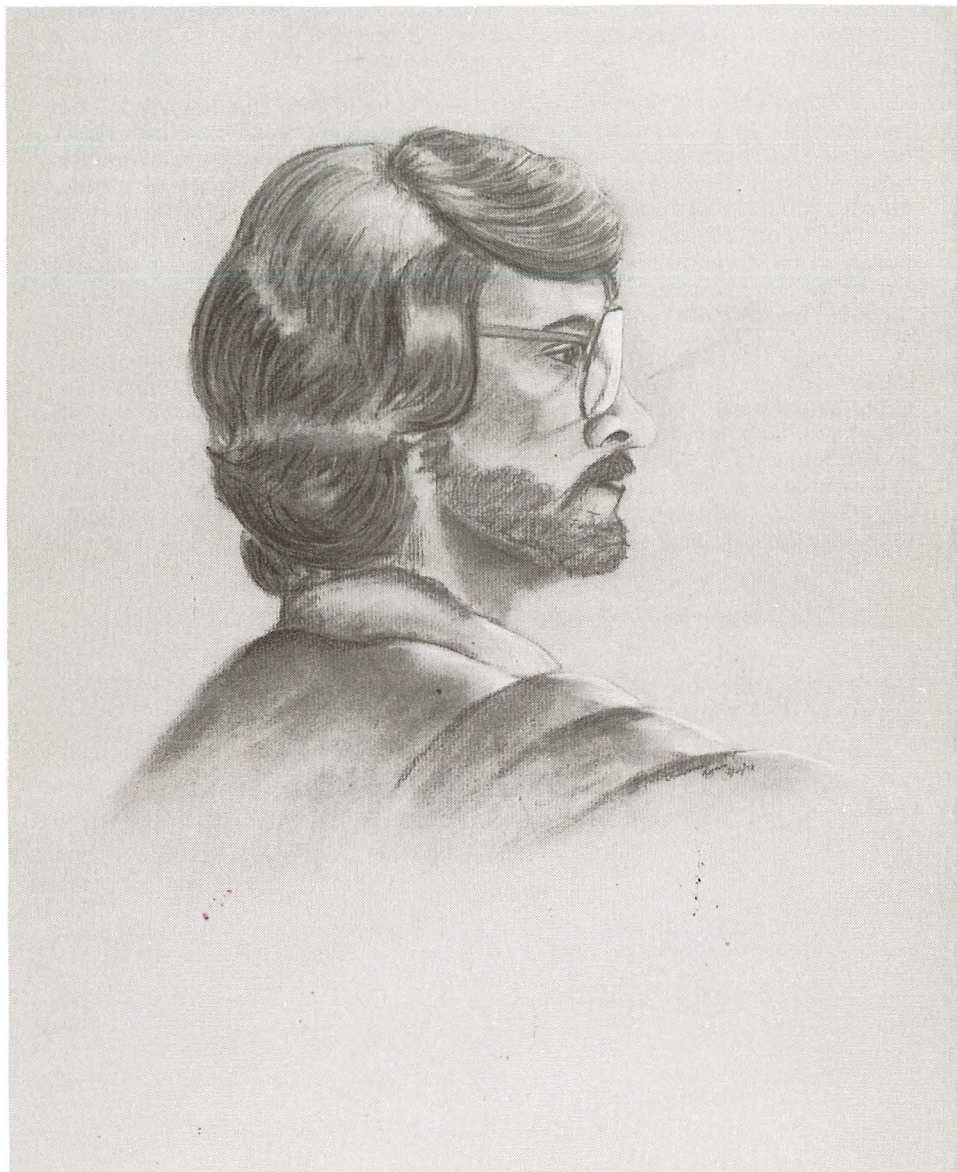
<sup>1</sup>C. Marlow, "The Tragic History of the Life and Death of Doctor Faustus," **Norton Anthology of English Literature**. (1974 ed.), I, Act 1, scene 1, line 9. All quotations are from this text.

## HAIKU

By

Pat Francesconi

A bird soars the skies,  
Touching Heaven's reflections—  
Silent, graceful flight.



"Ray" Head Study

Chris Bookman



# Of Life And Dying

By

Judy Williams

In the poem "Sailing to Byzantium" by William Butler Yeats, the truth of the despair of growing old is well expressed. For each man, there comes a time when he is no longer young and can vividly see the end of his life.

In the first stanza of the poem, the country mentioned is probably Ireland, the land of Yeats' birth, but it could be anywhere in spring of the year. An old man sees lovers in each other's arms and feels the loss of the passion of youth. Even the birds and fish are about one thing — the birth of the new generation. Birds sing their spring songs as they build their nests. In the streams, salmon make the last trip of their lives to spawn. New life is everywhere — on land, in the sea, in the air. Summer brings life that was conceived in spring. Everything is caught up in the physical aspects of life, leaving pursuits of the mind to themselves as if they were old monuments. The choice of words such as "begotten, born and dies" says a lot about how fast life goes. All the world of nature follows the same pattern. Yeats uses end rhyme to call attention to the first six lines as a statement about the spring of life. In the last two lines of the stanza, he notes that all are too busy for dealing with knowledge where an old man might feel more at ease. "That is no country for old men" seems quite appropriate.

In the second stanza, the metaphor of an old man to a torn coat is used to show that unless a man has lived and been battered, he is nothing. "Unless" is used at the end of line 10 to bring hope because it is followed at the beginning of line 11 by the words "Soul clap its hands and sing." This acknowledges the need to look not at the physical being but at the spiritual. In line 13, the alliteration of "singing school but studying" adds interesting sound to the passage. In his mind, the old man looks to the city of Byzantium for answers. In this allusion, the ancient holy city seems to be the place where the soul might find peace.

The old man calls on the wise men of God in stanza three, to help him learn lessons of the spirit. The term "perne in a gyre," meaning to spin in a spiral, is an unusual phrase. The picture it brings to mind is of spirits descending to teach the old man truths of eternity. He calls on them to devour his heart, which is weary with longing for sexual pleasures of youth. The term "fastened to a dying animal" expresses well his frustration with a body that no longer is able to respond. He asks to be taken into the deception of eternity. His desire to be relieved of the pain of life is great. The word "artifice" used in line 24 reveals a certain surrender to something less than he desires, a submission.

In the last stanza, the subject of growing old and death are dealt with in an unusual way. The old man has lived, but the pain of living is now greater than the pleasure. Once life is gone, he will have no desire to return to the pain and pleasure of the physical world. The "Grecian goldsmiths" were known in Byzantium to create beautiful objects from hammered gold. The old man's desire is to return as one of the golden birds that Emperor Theophilus had created to sit on golden branches in his garden. In this way, he could sing but not have to endure again the pain of life.

The theme of life and dying has been treated in an unusual and moving way in this poem. Yeats shows life as the end approaches, and it is bitter sweet. He accomplishes this well in four stanzas dealing with birth, maturity, dying and afterlife. Interesting words and phrases show his sensitivity to the subject. A great deal has been said about life and death in these few passages.





Figure Study

George Richmond

# WATER WAYS

By

Jane Grosor

Tears  
melting  
down  
warm cheeks

Rain  
skating  
down  
frosty window panes

green water  
rocky ride roller coasting  
Niagara F

A  
L  
L  
S

Waves  
wandering into  
shore

Drips  
droppin'  
down  
da  
drain

~ rivers winding, turning, and bending out to sea ~

# On Being Harvested

By

Nancy Gates

Every person on this earth has one thing in common; we are all going to die someday. Although the inevitability of dying is commonly known, attitudes tend to vary from one of intense dread to a cool resolvment, accepting it as a part of living. In his lifetime, one's attitude on death can change; as he matures, his thinking changes and so change his attitudes. An attitude can also be altered by an event, especially if that event is a death of someone close to him.

However, of all us mortals, the young tend to fear death the most. As a child, this writer possessed all sorts of contorted ideas of a person's expiration. As far back as I can remember, each time some distant uncle or aunt passed away, a realization slowly built up in my mind of the permanence of death; these people were never coming back. This newly found realization, which came about age twelve, left me with an anxiety of my own mortality.

Throughout my adolescence, composing poetry from my thoughts, gave me an outlet and release from my anxieties. At seventeen years of age, I wrote the following poem to express my feelings on the subject of my own death:

Life is so grand and to my dismay  
It makes me shudder to think I'll die someday.  
When death walks up my lawn, I'll lock the door,  
Pull down the shades and hide on the floor.  
If he gets in the house to announce my death,  
I'll scream and I'll fight until my last breath.  
My hands will grasp 'til they can not more  
To my life and a world I truly adore.

As the poem expresses, it was certain that my attitude on death was one of intense dread at the age of seventeen. But, at the age of nineteen, an event occurred which largely altered my attitude.

The first half of the attitude-altering event took place in the fall of my twentieth year, late September. I was visiting my octogenarian grandfather, who for sometime had been telling me stories and events from his long and full life. He told me about his young and frivolous years, of hardships during various stages of his life, of jobs he had taken for the sake of survival only; he told me of a fire in which he lost a child, of economic depressions where no employment could be found, and of all the wonderful friends he had had. He related each experience as a period of change for him, and that, by going through each phase, he grew into a stronger and wiser person. He related his growth through life to all living things on earth and considered himself very much a part of the earth. While we sat together, he showed me photographs of his friends, family and co-workers, (all of them were deceased by that time). I remember him saying, "I feel like an old, dried-up corn stalk standing alone in the middle of a harvested corn field that once was growing and flourishing in the sun, and all the other stalks have been taken by the farmer and I stand here alone, waiting."

That conversation, which I will always remember, took place only ninety days before my Grandfather's passing. When I heard the news of his death, I



just sat and went into a gaze; my thoughts traveled back three months before and saw a harvested corn field with a withered corn stalk no longer tilting in the wind, but lying on the ground, gone home to the earth. A quiet, calm realization crept over me, a realization of peaceful serenity, of rest, and of growth. I never shed a tear over Grandfather's death; not that day, the day of his funeral, not any other day since then.

This quiet, calm realization stayed with me a long time, and day by day a much bigger actualization came to me: death is a part of living. All through our lifetime, we are growing and nearing closer to that final stage of growth, death. When one has lived his life, stage by stage, growing every step of the way, it seems to me that it should not be so frightening for one to move on to that final stage of growth, or in my words, being harvested.

## Giving Old Man Winter A Dig

By

Robin White

Ice is not nice,  
I've been stuck once, twice, thrice.  
It is tenacious, voracious, even rapacious.

(like a dirty old man)

I believe it's the sun,  
The ugly affair is done.  
Your ego is cracked,  
The cards against you are stacked.

(you cheat a lot, anyway)

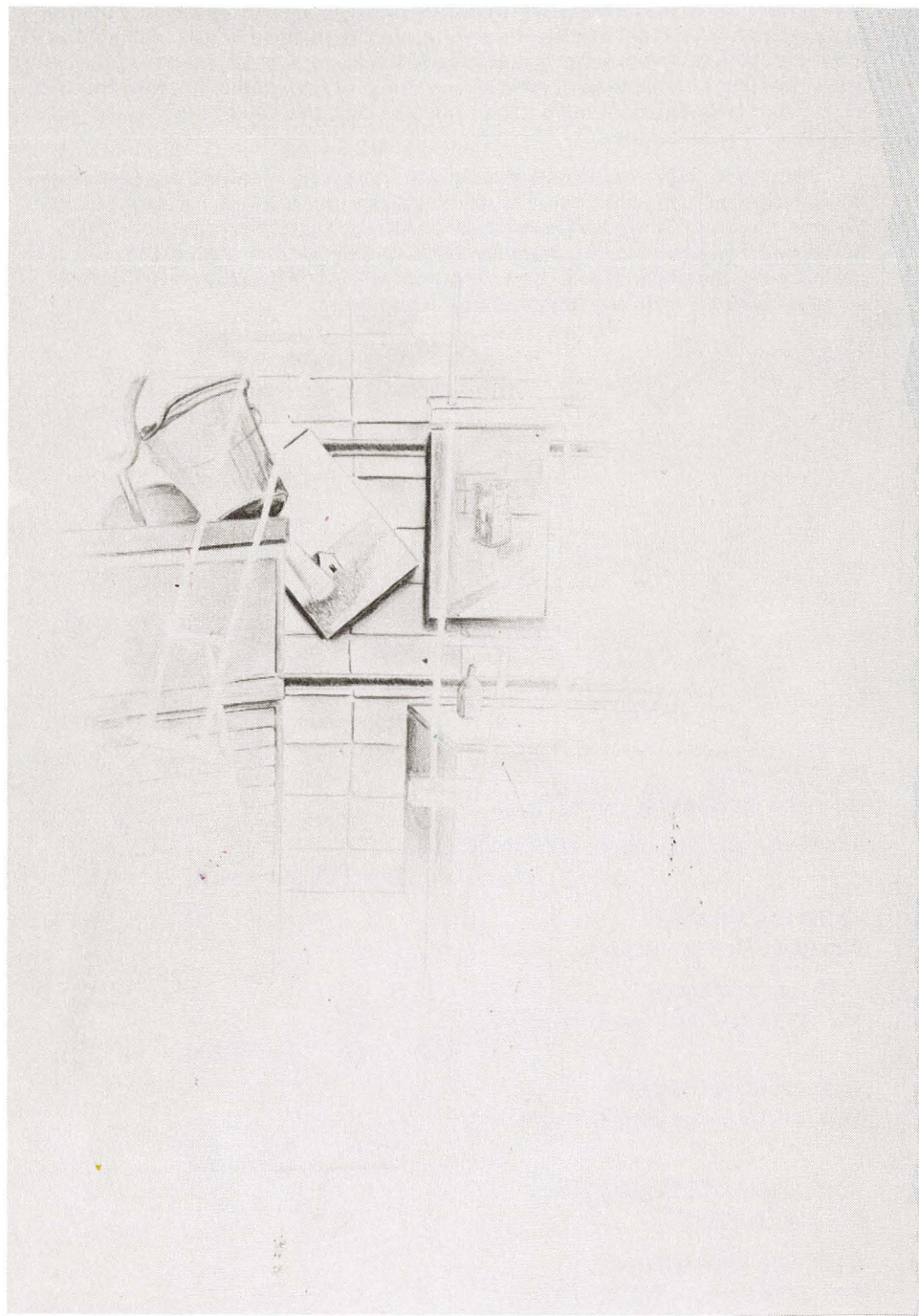
Your nasty vice is spent,  
And no one cares where it went.

(not a solitary soul)

How do you like them apples,  
Old Man Winter?

Buckle up your galoshes,  
And pack up your bag of tricks.

'Tis you who are leaving,  
Not I.



Studio Interior

Irene Murphy

# English — A Foreign Language?

By

Vida Bonacci

"Words . . . are symbols that may be varied and combined in a thousand ways," states Suzanne Langer. This perfectly describes the varied forms of the English language. An English-speaking American cannot understand an English-speaking Englishman because different words are used to express the same idea. The English spoken in England is a foreign language which must be learned.

An American can learn to speak the English version in a number of ways. First, he can go to the library and find any material on the subject. He also can read publications written by English authors and define the strange words through their context. Thirdly, he can find a Englishman who will teach the word differences. The best route, however, is to take a personal trip to the land of the strange tongue.

If one decides with the latter, here are some helpful hints to guide the tourist along. The examples fit one of three categories: food, appearance and transportation.

The all-English food is fish and chips. Chips are the American's French fries. Our (potato) chips are known as crisps overseas. To accompany the crisps is the all American hamburger. The hamburger can be flavored with either (pronounced i' ther) red sauce or salad creme (mayonnaise). American pie (pizza) is also available. To satisfy the sweet tooth there are biscuits (cookies), sweets (candy), lollies (suckers), cakes (doughnuts) and chewy (chewing gum). Tea time at five o'clock is the equivalent to our lunch. The big meal, dinner, is served at noon and appropriately labelled dinner-time.

Food affects a person's appearance. If an attractive male catches the eye, he is lovely. If a person is dressed well, he is smart. A smart looking bloke (man) could wear a polo neck (turtleneck), jumper (sweater) or a pair of trousers. A woman may wear a pair of culottes (gauchoes) or the fashionable grey coloured tights (panty hose nylons). A youngster can wear her hair in plaits (braids) or a fringe (bangs). A teenager can flick his hair, i.e. his bangs are pulled back off his face.

Where can we go now all dressed up? How about a movie at the cinema? There are several modes of transportation we can use. We can use a lorry (truck), coach (Greyhound type bus), tube (subway) or caravan (moving house trailer). The routes used could be a motorway (freeway), carriageway (divided highway), roundabout (intersection in shape of circle) or a cul-de-sac (dead end street). We must beware (take caution) of overtaking (passing) or not giving way (yielding). We must take care of the car, especially the windscreen (windshield), tyres, bonnet (front of car containing engine) and the boot (trunk). Make sure also there is a license to operate the vehicle. If trouble crops up, we can repair the car at the petrol station.

James Baldwin once quoted Henry James' words, "It is a complex fate to be an American." How true this is if the American is in England. The American must learn the vocabulary of England. It shall come in handy for him someday.



# Just a Dumb Machine

By

Steve Lambert

Colonel Steve Austin pushed several buttons on a computer console filled with flashing lights. Something, somewhere hummed into action. That Christmas Tree-like computer panel is what TV producers think computers look like. They show computers as superbrains with spinning reels of tape. A computer is really just a dumb machine.

Real computers do not have rows of flashing, lighted squares. Two or three rows of sixteen small bulbs is the maximum. Many computer systems do not have tape drives that spin around like a crazed tape recorder. For the most part, a computer set-up is blank panels with a few lights, buttons, and a typewriter terminal. Computers do not make funny little beeping noises. In a real computer center, the electronic machinery is silent and a lot of noise is produced by the air-conditioning equipment needed to keep the computer cool.

Contrary to what television likes to show and what many people think, a computer is totally stupid. It cannot give the instructions needed to run a program without first having previous instructions. A computer can do almost anything from controlling a car's ignition to flying a jet aircraft, but it must have the proper instructions. It controls its own devices such as printers, terminals, and punched-card readers which are really a part of the computer, because without them, it would just sit there, useless.

Because a computer is so unintelligent, it is only useful for complex tasks that must be repeated regularly. There is a rule in data processing: if it is something that only needs to be done once, forget the computer. More time would be spent in writing the program than in doing the problem "by hand." The only things a computer has going for it over a human are speed and accuracy. The Central Processing Unit of a computer is so fast that it sits idle much of the time while it waits for its peripheral devices to feed and receive information.

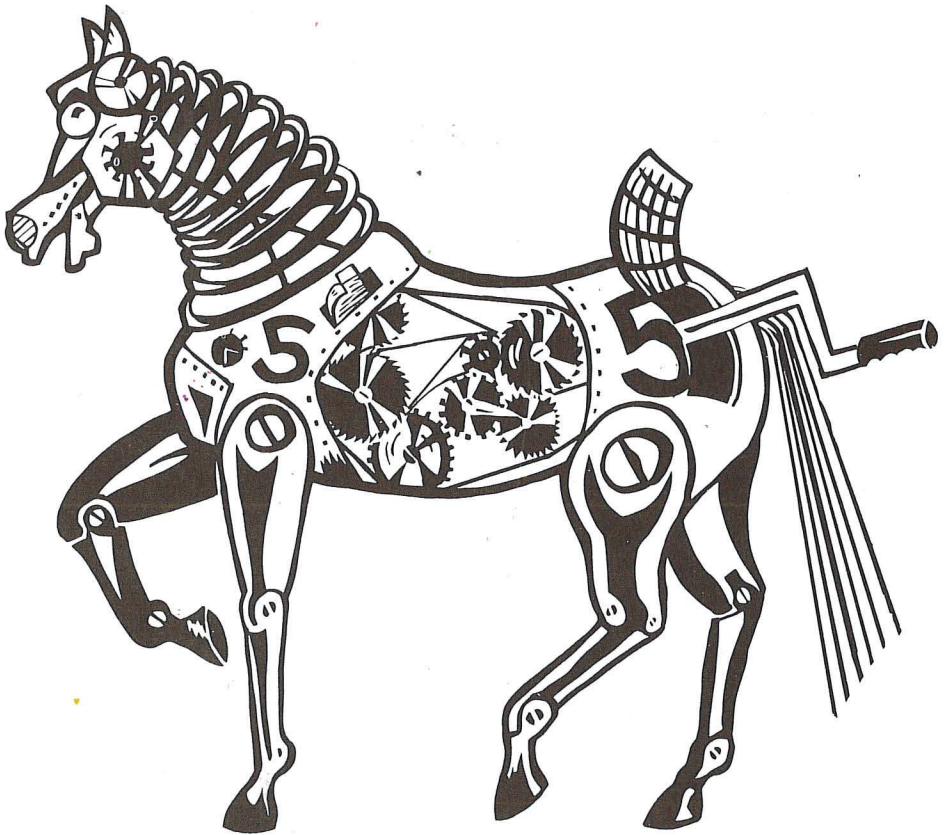
Remember the slogan "Guns don't kill people, people do"? Here is one for computers: "Computers don't make errors, people do." ("To err is human.") When someone gets an electric bill of \$64,492.37 for his two bedroom ranch house, the goof is automatically placed on the computer. There is another rule in data processing: "GI,GO," which means "Garbage In, Garbage Out." The high-powered electric bill was probably caused by a mistake on the part of the meter reader or a person responsible for entering data into the computer. It was not the fault of the computer.

In computer programming, the programmer begins to rely on parts of Murphy's Law of Perversity which was recently printed in Ann Lander's column: "Nothing is as easy as it looks. Everything takes longer than you expect. If anything can go wrong, it will. If you think everything will be O.K., you have surely overlooked something. Mother Nature (and the computer) always sides with the hidden flaw."

The computer is a wonderful tool when used properly and efficiently. Computers and computer programmers are doing a fantastic job allowing

business and government to operate faster and better. An executive can be supplied regularly with almost any information he desires about his company. But problems can arise when this information is not put to the best use. Norman Cousins said it in "The Computer and the Poet," in **The Odyssey Reader**: "The biggest single need in computer technology is not for improved circuitry, or enlarged capacity, or prolonged memory, or miniaturized containers, but for better questions and better use of the answers." This is the need in data processing, to educate the people in management who use the data.

Computers are not the humming gods portrayed by television and movies; they are simply heaps of electronic circuitry which can do nothing without the hands of a human. Trends today aim for more efficiency, more speed, and smaller size, but perhaps we also need to show people what computers really are. Apologies to Col. Austin, HAL, and Colossus.



Mechanical Secretariat

Kathy Wise

# Chaotic Peace

By

Sandra Faust

The stereo is turned on full blast, T.V. roaring, and three kids singing, dancing, laughing and crying. What a place to be, when a person feels as if the roof is going to cave in.

The dinner dishes are still in the sink just waiting to be cleaned and put back on the shelves in their proper place. Finally, Heidi gets up and attempts to make her way to the kitchen. Singing and doing the new dance step, she falls over her feet, knocks over the kitchen chair, and stubs her toe. "Heidi, you have got to look before you move your body towards things. Don't cry, I know it hurts, and yes, you still have to do those dishes." I could see myself in her, at that clumsy age of nine. Poor thing, she is so uncoordinated. Oh no, there goes another glass. "Did it break this time, Heidi?"

"Yes, but, it was only a small one."

Water and broken glass all over the floor. What can happen next?

"Okay, kids, you have to turn things off and get ready if you are going to make the church bus on time." Things started to fly. When the T.V. set was turned off, the lamp was knocked over. "Watch that plant! Hey, somebody, catch the records. Heidi, are you done with the dishes yet? I really don't believe this is happening, but now the gerbils are out, and they have to be caught before you kids leave or we will never get them."

"One went in the bathroom; hurry shut the door; we can get that one later. Look!!, two went under the chair! Chip, get on one side and I'll corner it from this side. I have the tail of one, can you reach the other one? There goes one under the art bookcase. Heidi, not this one. The one under the art bookcase. Laurie, you help Chip get that other one. Chip, did you get that one? Fine, then put it in the cage, not the box. Laurie, don't squeeze them; just pick it up by the tail. Here, I will take it for you. Good girl, Heidi. Be careful now, the gerbil is scared, so he might try and bite you. I know, Heidi, they are hard to hold. Did anybody see where it went? There it is in the doll house. I have it, well, I did have it. It is in the plant." Finally, they are all accounted for and the cage door is shut, right?

"The bus is here; get your coats on and I will catch the last gerbil in the bathroom." As each child runs out the door and yells, "bye, see you later," I can not help but think, I hope it is much later.

Now, to get the last gerbil. Why in the world did I get them in the first place, heaven only knows. On my hands and knees, I open the door to the bathroom very slowly. Should I leave the lights off, or should I turn them on? I don't want to scare him or I'll never get him. Boy, it sure gets dark in here. I never really noticed that the door squeaked. "Hi there, you beady-eyed little creature." As I reached forward the gerbil dashed behind the toilet. Still on my hands and knees and my head behind the toilet, I was glad that there wasn't anybody here to see me. "I have you now. Ouch!, you little varmint, that is my finger. Now, where are you?" There he is, watching me from the magazine rack with, what looks like a smile to me. He didn't move this time, but just sat there like a good little gerbil. I picked him up and put him safely back in the cage with the others.



With everybody gone, I decided to enjoy the silence with a cup of steaming hot coffee, while I could. As I sat down in my favorite chair and my feet propped up I hear the thunder of silences. It was so loud I could hardly bear it. It seemed to deafen my ears, while giving a sense of animation. The clicking of the main switch and roar of the furnace was bouncing off the walls. I can almost hear, "Jack Frost" painting on the windows, those beautiful scenes he always paints. I am so glad to be here inside, very warm and cozy.

I couldn't help, but smile at the voices coming from outside as they sang, "You are the Sunshine of my Life." Yes, they are all home again. As the door flings open, Heidi falls in over the gerbil box and hits her head on the sofa. "Are you hurt Heidi? Stop crying, so I can understand you. Oh!, for heavens sakes, Laurie, the dog does not want to see the gerbils."

## Folk Dreamin'

By

J. A. Montgomery

I was asked to write a tune  
about following the moon  
or was it about following the setting sun?  
But I've never wandered very far  
neither traveling by foot or  
traveling by car,  
so I could never write a folk song like that,  
  
I could never write a folk song  
about little ol' me,  
tripping along, singing a song  
about the heat of July coming over the rise  
and the breath of spring falling behind me  
No. I could never write a folk song like that.



Untitled

P. M. Barrett

# An Important Spoke

By

Stephen W. Strobbe

The man walked through the carnival alone.  
Went because he felt some obligation  
to at least attend the festivities.

Immersed in chaos.  
Steeped in bright light.  
The amoeba-mass poured through  
tight-shouldered corridors,  
with sand, paper-wrapper, and peanut-shell floors.  
Cotton candy couples insisted on walking wide by wide.

He almost imagined himself an important spoke  
on the largest ferris wheel.

He was indeed a-part.  
He rode no rides,  
nor did he stop his ears  
against incessant, joyous screams of terror  
that hung in the air,  
hurled from cages and capsules overhead.

He tried no sure-loss games of skill,  
but watched the players spit  
out silver dollars for a prize.

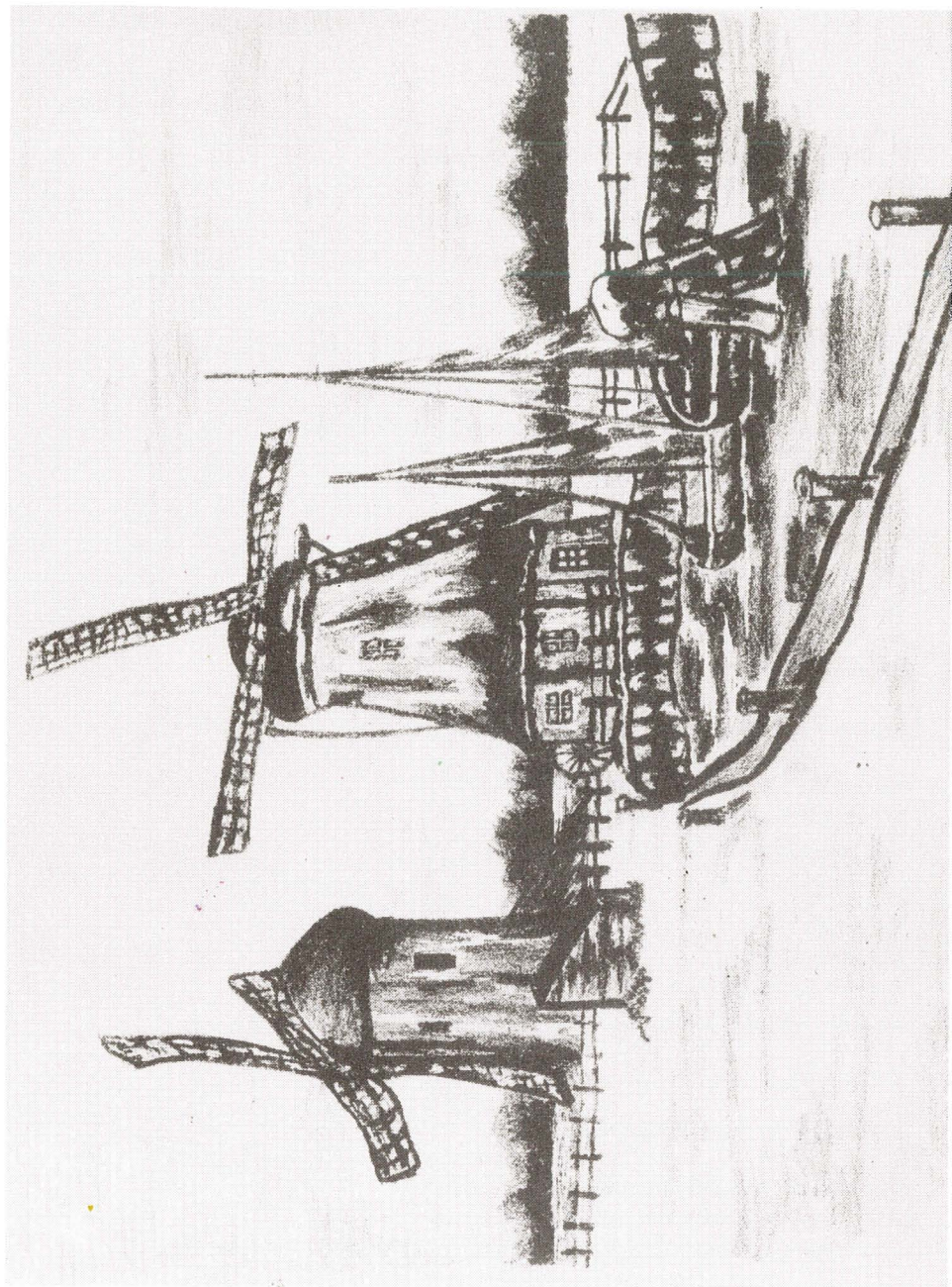
Eyes tire  
but he stayed.  
Stayed because he knew  
as soon as he left, he'd be sure to miss something

something good

a man falling from a high wire

or maybe a celestial dancer  
handing him a very full balloon  
and kissing away the bright red rouge on his cheeks.





Windmills

Ted Wynne-Jones

# There Ain't Many Cowboys Left

by

Ricky Mitchell

"My heroes have always been cowboys, and they still are it seems.

Sadly in search of and one step in back of themselves and their slow movin' dreams."

Waylon Jennings © 1973

"This must be it." Sunny was looking through the window of the Greyhound Station, and had spotted the bus with a Pocatello sign inserted in the slot over the windshield.

I looked out into the grey-skied, rainy October day, and reached down to grab my bag. Ben had already picked it up while I was staring out the window, and without a word we made our way through the incoming passengers towards the glass doors.

The three of us stood in the drizzle watching the remainder of the passengers exit from the bus. They were the same people I'd always seen getting off Greyhounds. The lost looking road-kids, the old ladies with their cardboard suitcases, and the young wives with their crying children. Sure, there might be a businessman in a suit or a young college girl thrown in to confuse a first-time traveler, but after a few rides you realized that their stories were always the same. They preferred the slow ride and scenic trip, to that damn push-and-shove jet travel. Sure they did. Wouldn't anyone prefer a twenty-hour cramped ride on a bus, instead of a two hour, comfortable jaunt in the friendly skies. "Why not," I thought. "Hadn't I told the same story?"

"Well, good-by," Ben said as he extended his hand. "We had us some damn good times, my friend." There was a warmth of understanding in his voice, because he sensed that it was my time to move on.

"Yeah," I said as I reached out to shake his hand. "We sure did have some rich moments, Ben. I owe you some good times, so you follow Sunny back to Michigan in the spring, and I'm gonna repay in full. Thanks for everything."

I looked over at Sunny, and could tell he was still mad by the way he kept kicking the sidewalk with the heel of his boot. He'd been like this since yesterday afternoon when I told him it was time for me to go home. I guess he thought I was running out on him, and maybe I was. But I for one wasn't going to lie around Idaho all winter without a dime in my pocket. Besides, his madness was running away with him, and I could see visions of the state reformatory in his future.

For a long moment I stared at him trying to see the Sunny I'd grown up with, but that Sunny was gone — two tours of Vietnam gone — left somewhere in the hills and scattered villages of Southeast Asia.

"Christ," I thought, "Why can't he leave it behind like so many others did? Why can't he bury the hate and anger with the bodies of the dead?"

"He loved it," Ben had said one night as we stood at the bar watching Sunny shoot pool.



"What do you mean?" I asked, glancing over at him.

"The war man. Hell, you're always trying to cool him when he gets crazy. Leave it alone. We tried that in Nam when he first got this way, until we realized what the problem was. He didn't want to rotate. I mean he really didn't want to leave. He made that war his whole life, and he didn't want it to end. So he brought it home with him. Old gunner Sunny fights that war in his head every day. He fights it with himself, and I think he's losing. No way to reach him my friend, so just leave it alone. Besides, didn't anyone ever tell you that there's no one as desperate and lonely as a soldier without a war?"

I remembered how Ben had tried to smile that night, but I couldn't help noticing the sadness in his eyes. I found myself unable to smile now as I moved toward Sunny.

"Sunny," I said reaching out, "I'll see you in the spring." His right hand was in a cast, so he gave me a quick shake with his left.

"Damn arm," he said staring at the cast. "I thought sure as hell I had one more bolt to go when that transmission fell on me."

He had broken his arm last week, stealing a transmission to replace the one in his car that had worn out on the trip here. "Damn risky business," I thought, but somehow I felt obligated to help. Ben and I had taken the lookouts while Sunny crawled under the car to do the wrenching. It looked as if everything would go smoothly, but then we heard him scream like a wild man. We both ran to the car, but by that time Sunny had pulled himself out from under it.

"Grab the transmission," he screamed. I could tell his arm was broken by the way it dangled at his side, but he wanted that transmission. "Grab the goddamn thing," he repeated. Ben and I hurriedly picked it up and carried it to the car. We drove Sunny to the hospital to get his arm set, and this offered him another chance to bilk the system. He gave the admitting nurse a phony name, and then skipped without paying the bill. So possibly I was running out on him, or maybe I was just following my better judgment for a change.

The bus driver was about to close the luggage compartment so Ben walked over and gave him my bag.

"Take care, Sunny," I said hurriedly, "and stay out of sight until you get the cast off."

"Sure," he said. "Do me a favor when you get home will ya? Tell that bastard Rubleman to send the fifty bucks he owes me."

"All right," I said, and moved towards the open door of the bus. I nodded at Ben, we both said good-bye, and the door closed behind me.

As I moved towards the back of the bus I remembered I still had on the Navaho hat I'd bought earlier that morning. Near the back of the bus I took a window seat, depositing a sack I was carrying on the overhead rack before I sat down. As the bus began to roll I slid into the seat with the hat in my hands, and looked back for Sunny and Ben. It had begun to rain harder, and I saw them under the awning of the Greyhound Station. They both waved, and then the bus was around the corner moving towards the outskirts of town.

I looked down at the hat in my hands and realized how out of place it would be back in Michigan. It was one of those Navaho Indian hats, that the



Indians only wear in the movies. It was stiff as a board, tall and domed shaped, with a brim big enough to rest beer cans on. I'd bought it on sale, because I was a sucker for anything on sale, if I needed it or not. I turned it over and looked at the label inside. "Broadway Boot Shop, Idaho Falls, Idaho, Est. 1930." I wondered why the shop had gone bust after forty-five years. They had those "going out of business" signs hanging everywhere, and I kind of wished I had asked the sales girl what had happened. "Probably pushed out by the big chains," I reasoned. "There wasn't much left for the independent anymore, not even in the West."

I glanced out the window and saw the rain beating on the side of the bus. It was raining even harder now, and the grey-black sky looked as if it could go on for hours. The rain pelted the bus in wind-driven sheets, and made the sound I had known so well in my boyhood when we slept under tin roofs. In my boyhood, farmhouse days, the sound had given me a feeling of security and warmth, but this was the sound of highway loneliness that combined with the dampness to send chills up my back. I hoped it wouldn't rain like this for the entire two days that lay ahead.

The ticket agent in Idaho Falls had told me it would be a slow ride until Salt Lake City. I looked at my schedule, and saw that we would pick up passengers in a number of small towns. I didn't really mind traveling the slow, two-lane blacktop roads. I hadn't seen much of the country on the way out, and I needed some memories to take home. The hum of the diesel was steady, the road was long, and there would be time to think.

The airbrakes began to hiss, and I saw the stop sign ahead the driver was braking for. It was a four-corner stop, but he maneuvered the turn on a roll without completely stopping. "He's a smooth driver," I thought. "I bet he wishes he was out on the interstate where he could wind his diesel up." He was a big man, and even in the driver's seat you could tell he would stand well over six feet. He must have been a real bruiser when he was younger, but those days were behind him now. He'd gone to flab from too many miles behind the wheel, and too many bus-stop meals.

There was only one other passenger on the bus. A lady in her sixties who had left her things on the seat, but was not there when I sat down. She had gone out, and because of this, I was sitting across the aisle from the only other passenger.

"She's a portrait of the rain," I thought as I glanced across the aisle at her. There she was in her grey-faded plain dress, with her black coat thrown loosely over her shoulders, and a black bonnet over her grey hair. She appeared to be nearsighted. Not because of the wirerimmed glasses she wore, but because she was reading with a book on her lap as she sat bolt upright. Her finger was slowly moving across the page as a marker, as if she wanted to be sure she didn't miss a word.

There was no mistaking that she was a Mormon. Shelley, a small town outside of Idaho Falls, was a Mormon community, and I'd seen ladies dressed like her on the streets of Idaho Falls many times. I couldn't see the book she was reading very well, but I knew it must be the Book of Mormons. They carried it everywhere, to let the outsiders know that they were a dedicated lot. Sure, they might still practice polygamy up in the hills, and use the church as an excuse to make love to five different wives, but they were a dedicated lot. There was a thunder clap that shook the bus, and I looked out the window at the dreary sky and beating rain. There was rain outside, and the human

dreariness across the aisle. Her finger moved slowly across the page.

I remembered I'd brought along a book to read, and I stood to get it out of the bag on the overhead rack. The Mormon lady glanced at me as I stood up, but only for an instant. She had to get back to her finger before her eyes fell behind. In that split second she had probably decided that I wasn't even a "Latter Day Saint," and there wouldn't be any point in starting a conversation with me. It was just as well.

As I sat down, I stared at the thick paperback in my hands. I'd bought it because of the size. Biggest damn paperback I'd ever seen. Seven hundred pages for only a dollar thirty-five. I really was a sucker for a bargain, and to be honest, a catchy title. It was entitled, **You Can't Go Home Again**, by Thomas Wolfe. When I saw it in the rack in the bus stop, I wondered how it could take so many pages for a man to tell why he couldn't go home. I had two days of bus travel to read it, and maybe I'd know before I reached home.

I turned the book over to look at the back cover. They had some background information about the author, and I thought it might be interesting to know what had driven him to write a novel so large. It said that he had died at thirty eight, but had published three novels prior to his death, and left behind countless manuscripts for others. This book was one of the last written. "Dead at thirty eight," I thought, "but at least he accomplished something." I felt pretty insignificant when I read this and realized that my life had been pointless and nondirectional for a long time now. I looked out the window and saw the last of the dead leaves hanging on the October trees. It would soon be winter.

The water lying in the passing fields reminded me of yesterday morning when Ben and I had driven across town to a bridge above the falls, that the town had taken its name from. Sunny had stayed home complaining about his arm, but Ben had insisted on showing me this view of the falls. As we stood staring into the river, I wondered why he had brought me here. I looked over at Ben, and noticed that he was staring intently at the water, lost in thought.

"Kinda like life, isn't it?" he said.

"How do you mean, Ben?"

"Well, you see the Snake River there. That's life. We're all rushing down the snake, and pretty soon that falls is there in front of us. Oh, we might backpaddle for a while, but sooner or later we're going over that falls. How long you been on the road now anyway?"

"About two years. Since I left school," I answered.

"You ever wonder where you're going?"

"Yes, sometimes," I answered. Lately it had gotten to the point that I questioned it everyday. I wanted my life to go on like this forever. I liked the independence, and the friendships that developed. But lately the feeling of being my own man had been running headlong into the thoughts about the insignificance of my life. As I looked on I could see that falls getting a little too close.

"You know, Ben, I've been giving some thought to going home. You know, think things over and see the people I grew up with. I want to keep living like I am, but maybe I need a change."



"Yeah, I know what you mean," he said as he stared into the water. "I kicked around the West Coast for a couple years after Vietnam, but even if the old man hadn't had the heart attack I think I would have come home to work on the ranch. Not that home is the answer for everyone, but this is where I'm gonna take my stand. Maybe if you go home and think things over, you'll find your own answers. You gotta be careful, because some lifestyles have a way of becoming obsolete."

We turned to walk back to the car, but suddenly Ben stopped and looked at me.

"There ain't many cowboys left," he said looking back at the river. "Damn shame, too."

The bus was slowing down now, and I could see a few small buildings in the distance. As we came closer, I saw the city-limits sign standing in the driving rain. "Firth, Idaho, Pop. 293," it read. As we rolled into town, I couldn't help but think how beat it looked. Because of the rain there wasn't a person on the street, and because the old mining town buildings hadn't had a coat of paint in years, it took on the eerie quality of a ghost town. We continued through the town until we came to a truck stop on the outskirts.

The bus driver half turned in his seat and shouted back, "We won't be stopping long, just taking on passengers." He wheeled into the diner, and I saw two men moving towards the bus.

When I saw them, I instantly thought about what Ben had told me at the falls. "You're wrong, Ben," I thought. "Cowboys are alive and well in Firth, Idaho." They didn't look much like bigger-than-life movie cowboys, but just the same, they were cowboys.

The shorter man was dragging two saddles towards the bus, while his partner carried a cardboard box and a sack. It was hard to make out much because of the rain running off the windows, but as they came closer I could get a somewhat distorted look at the two. They were both dressed pretty much the same: well worn levis, muddy boots, and range jackets. The short man had a black cowboy hat on that was so worn that the sides drooped in the rain, while the tall man wore a white one turned grayish brown from the dust it had seen.

The bus driver opened the door and stepped out. I couldn't see much of what was happening, but I could tell he was arguing with the two men. He looked at their tickets, and pointed at the luggage compartment midway down the bus. The short man tried to get past him with the saddles, but the driver wasn't going to have it. The cowboy must have wanted to take the saddles on the bus, but the driver kept pulling him towards the luggage compartment. Finally, the cowboy threw the saddles in the mud, and headed for the bus door. The tall man who had been watching from a few feet away, followed him on with the box and sack. The bus driver shook his head and dragged the saddles down to load them.

I could tell as soon as they came through the door that they were both drunk. Not just loud boisterous drunk, but damn near falling-down drunk. They came stumbling down the aisle, exchanging slurring words about the bus driver. I heard the clink of bottles in the sack as they came near, and glanced up to take a hurried look at them before they got by. They settled in the halfmoon seat in the back of the bus, and things became deathly quiet. I



looked over at the Mormon Lady, and she had a look somewhere between terror and disbelief on her face. She was probably considering walking back to Shelley. The bus driver came in and glanced back at the two men, giving them a hard cold stare. He turned and took his seat, and soon we were back on the highway.

In a few minutes I heard the paper sack rattle, and the clink of the bottles. So they weren't through yet. They must plan to be damn good and drunk by the time they get where they're going. "Well, it's none of my business," I thought, and picked up the novel that was still on my lap.

I opened the book and began to read, but I couldn't concentrate. I kept thinking about how the two cowboys had looked as they passed down the aisle. I thought they must be between fifty and sixty, but because they were so weather beaten, it was hard to be sure. The lines were so deeply etched into their faces, that they had the appearance of a cliff face beaten throughout time by the elements. They must have spent most of their lives in the outdoors, but they hadn't taken on a healthy look. Instead they had taken on the look of a man too long without shelter, a man who had missed too many meals, and drunk too much whiskey. They had been overtaken and defeated by time long before they should have been. I was sad for a moment as I stared out into the black-skied, late afternoon rain. I looked back at the paperback and tried to concentrate.

In about a half hour I felt something brush my foot as it rolled under the seat. It was a wine bottle, and it clattered on through the seats. I looked up to see the bus driver glance back through the overhead mirror, but he held firmly to the wheel. The Mormon lady raised her eyes for a moment and then looked back at her book. Her finger was traveling faster and faster across the page.

The volume of the cowboy's conversation had been increasing over the last few minutes, and since I couldn't avoid hearing it, I stopped reading to listen.

"William, I ain't going to work on no woman's ranch. Thirty years I been a hand. Thirty years, and I ain't never worked for no woman."

"But, Skelly, ya got to listen to reason. We ain't worked steady since last year, and I'm sick an tired of goin' hungry. And besides, Willa ain't no normal woman, she's blood kin, my sister."

From what I'd heard of their conversation when they had come on the bus, I judged William to be the tall man, but I couldn't tell if Skelly was the other man's first or last name.

"It don't matter. Can't ya tell what this is? It's charity. Plain and simple goddamn charity. You might be washed-up," Skelly said drunkenly, "but I still got some good years left in me."

"Washed up. Washed up," William yelled. "Why you simple-minded bastard, Skelly. What do you think we've been taking for the last six months if it wasn't charity. Christ, those ranchers were giving us a few days' work out of charity. They didn't need us. The only reason they let us work was because we worked for their daddies in the big days."

"Maybe, you're right about that William, but it just don't seem right.

Thirty years we been ranch hands together, and now we got nowhere left to go but your damn sister's."

All right, all right, you stubborn old bastard. You do what you want, but when I get to Tyhee I'm gonna call Willa to come and get me."

"You do that William. That's just where you belong is on a woman's ranch. You never was much of a hand anyway, but I been my own man for a long time, and I ain't gonna stop now."

And then I heard another bottle hit the floor, and bounce noisily between the seats. I looked up to see the bus driver half stand from his seat. He never turned around, but it was so quiet that I knew the cowboys had seen him.

"Now that's enough, you two," he screamed. "If you don't be quiet, I'm going to put you off."

I looked across the aisle and saw that the woman's finger had frozen in mid-page, and for the first time I was beginning to feel sorry for her. I thought for a moment that things would be all right, but the cowboy Skelly wasn't going to stand for this.

"Well, fuck you," he said under his breath. But in his drunkenness it came through somewhat louder than he realized.

I felt the words pass over my head, and hover over the bus driver like a black cloud. I could hear Skelly laughing, and William pleading with him to shut-up. The Mormon lady looked as if she might be ill, and her finger was traveling across the page at breakneck speed. In a second the bus was pulled over to the shoulder of the road.

The bus driver leaped from his seat but stopped midway down the aisle.

"That's it," he screamed. "I let you go on drinking back here, but you couldn't even put the bottles back in the sack. We got a woman on this bus, and I won't let you talk like that. Now get off."

"Please, mister," William pleaded. "Let us ride to Tyhee. It's only a few more miles, and you know we're gonna get off there. Don't make us walk into town in the rain. I'm sorry, and Skelly here is sorry, too."

"Is that right?" The bus driver asked, looking at Skelly.

"Yeah, I guess I'm sorry," Skelly said reluctantly as William prodded him in the side.

The bus driver was beginning to soften a little, but he still had fire in his eyes.

"All right. You boys keep your mouths shut, and you can ride into Tyhee. You're lucky it's only five miles in, or you'd both be out in the rain right now." He turned quickly and walked back to his seat.

"Christ, Skelly," I heard William say as the bus got under motion. "What the hell is the matter with you? You want to walk in that rain? Now just keep still until we get into Tyhee."

They were quiet now, and I started to read Wolfe again. I listened to the steady hum of the diesel, and read a few pages until I felt the bus slowing down. Not too far in the distance I saw the little town of Tyhee sitting under the darkened skies. The two men had begun to come to life again.

"Now Skelly, I don't want anymore arguments. When we get off I'm gonna call Willa, and we're gonna go work for her. She likes you, so she won't complain none. We need money, and we're gonna stay long enough to get us some."

"All right," Skelly said in a defeated voice. "But I never thought it would be like this, Bill. Thirty years we been livin' like this. Thirty years. It just don't seem right." He was half sobbing now. "I guess there just ain't nowhere left to go."

The bus pulled up in front of a small gas station, and the two men moved quietly down the aisle. They went out the door with the bus driver following, and I heard the luggage compartment door open and quickly close. The bus driver was back in a moment, and stationed himself behind the wheel. The bus moved towards the highway, but I turned to peer out the window for a last look. There they were in the rain, half dragging their saddles towards a phone booth at the side of the gas station. I couldn't look any longer, so I turned and began to read again.

We were moving down the highway at an even speed now, and I could feel the vibration of the water as it splashed off the tires onto the wheel wells under my feet. The Mormon lady slowly fingered another page, the rain beat down, and I wondered why Thomas Wolfe couldn't go home again.

I closed my eyes for a moment, and a vision of two cowboys dragging their saddles through the mud, slid quickly through my mind, only to be replaced by water breaking over a rocky falls. I wondered how close that falls was, and I wondered if Ben knew we were short two more cowboys.

## THREE BOYS WERE WATCHING

By

John L. VanDeusen

Three boys were watching  
A bird on a limb.  
The first said, "He looks cold,"  
"I'm glad I'm not him."  
The second one said, "I wish,  
I had the freedom he's got."  
The third boy said nothing;  
He just aimed his gun and shot.





Untitled Ink Drawing

Kitti Brown





Untitled

Lonnie Gross

# Sweeping Generalizations

By

Stephen W. Strobbe

Broom,

You and I were meant for better than this  
concrete wall, florescent light existence.  
Constantly sweeping up the day before:  
    the endless trailing dust of Sisyphus,  
    toe-ground butts, stained styrofoam coffee cups,  
pushed across a flat slab floor,  
poured and laid out as a life.

Soon, the always smiling  
slump-and-shuffle black man will be here  
to pick up my sweepings,  
ringing at the back door,

no teeth, laughing, saying  
never had a day he could call his own.  
Mondays, I give him Sunday wrapped in brown paper.

Now I'm not saying I've any regrets,  
Or that I'd ever do things differently,  
And after fifteen years I guess  
We're just about the best there is at this.

But broom,  
I'd retire today,  
leave you in a minute,

if I only had a dollar for every time caught  
cleaning out the corners of my consciousness,  
smiling like some omniscient idiot.





Woodcut Cat

Jyl Scott

# Cyril — Not Me!

By

Maureen Rowark

Cyril's arrival at our farm caused a certain amount of trepidation amongst us, for he was a runt boar born on a pig-feed demonstration farm. Being born in this unfit and unseemly condition, death was the automatic penalty. Jock, the demonstration farm manager, proceeded with his assigned task of disposing of such an affront to the hierarchy of the piggery by promptly bopping Cyril's head with a large rock — only Cyril's head was evidently much harder than the rock because it refused to cave in, consequently signs of life continued.

As this was the most dreaded part of his many duties, Jock just could not bring himself to bop Cyril's head again and felt that as Cyril was so hard headed he deserved a better fate than that which was his due for his effrontery in being born in such a bad shape. Therefore, Cyril, in a somewhat stunned and bruised condition, was tucked inside Jock's shirt and secretively brought to us for care and nurturing, as well as a possible companion for Oscar, our pedigreed Danish Landrace boar.

Now, Oscar was presenting a bit of a problem because when he was housed with the sows his amorous intents got the better of him as he would blithely and with the utmost glee endeavor to jump the railings of his sty, totally and completely forgetting that a four hundred-pound, yard-long mass of muscle, flesh and bone cannot, even with all willingness and wanton abandonment, navigate the height of a sty's rail without injury to himself and his very necessary family jewels.

His love proved stronger than mere damage to his hide, however, as he persistently tried to assuage his longings by getting closer to his harem of sows who, with all his performances, were squealing and running, banging and bumping into each other and running helter skelter in all directions. We could not continue to have all this ruckus amongst the sows nor could we have one irreparably damaged pedigreed blue-ribboned boar. He had to be moved.

The barn, two fields away, made a very nice sanctuary for Oscar. He had plenty of room in which to roam, and peace and quiet in which to relax, without the temptations of the harem wafting under his nose.

He relaxed; in fact, he relaxed to such an extent that he started pining away, with the result that he became ill with a nervous disorder of the skin; he was lonely. To help him get better we lodged him in a converted hen house which was situated much closer to the farmhouse and barn — but out of temptation's reach. This perked him up, but not quite quickly enough; had he been allowed to languish much longer he most certainly would have expired.

• Cyril, in the meantime, had made his appearance, and after his injuries had healed he was placed in the same sty as Oscar. They promptly became the best of friends: a most unusual state of affairs with two boars in the same pen, as this is not their natural affiliation.

As time passed their friendship flourished and they both grew healthy, with Oscar growing ever larger, but poor traumatized Cyril staying exactly the same size; his growth mechanism had been stunted by the bop on his head.

Cyril's growth was evidenced in strange ways. He grew long bushy

eyelashes, whiskers and a beard and a coat nearly as thick as fur, and along with this he became a wiser, more wily, lascivious creature. As these were the only attributes he had as a boar, plus a fine dexterity in maneuvering in and out of Oscar's pen and the railing of the sow's sties, he would sashay to and fro between his friend's house and the main barn with complete freedom.

Stunted though he was, his brain functioned sufficiently for him to make the best of a bad personal situation. He talked to Oscar. Many times he would be noticed off in the corner of the hen house with Oscar, grunting and squeaking and making his point with his little trotters stamping on the ground, and Oscar looking down at him with earnest concentration.

After observing the many trips made by Cyril back and forth between Oscar's house and the sow's barn, and listening to the squeals within the barn during and after Cyril's visit, as well as the rumpus caused by Oscar upon Cyril's return, we humans finally figured it out — Cyril was acting on Oscar's behalf. This observation certainly made the job of mating animals much simpler for us.

Although ten-pound Cyril could not have his way with a four or five-hundred pound Yorkshire White sow, he attained satisfaction in apprising his very best friend of the situation, after having sorted out the status quo within the harem and informing Oscar which were the maids-in waiting.

Then there was bliss. All Oscar's thwarted love attempts were finally alleviated.

Spring and summer rolled on into fall with all members of the piggery being mutually satisfied. But Oscar began to outgrow the cost of his board and lodging and his offspring were not being produced in sufficient quantities to warrant his upkeep. The day of reckoning arrived — he had to go. He went to a wealthier farmer with a much larger stock of sows, where his blue-ribboned, pedigreed prized mass would be put to much better prolific use than we were able to offer him.

The sows and the bacon pigs went off to market, but what of Cyril; dear old wizened Cyril, his fate had come full circle — death. Back to Jock, for we did not have the heart to give the final blow.

The next we saw of him he was all carved up and dressed with stuffing, apple sauce accompaniment and all the other trimmings, for Sunday dinner. Nary a one of us could eat; all we could see, in place of a fine roast of pork was Cyril's wise old eyes shining out from under his bushy eyelashes with twitching, bearded, bewhiskered snout, as if to say — not me.

We did not eat that day.



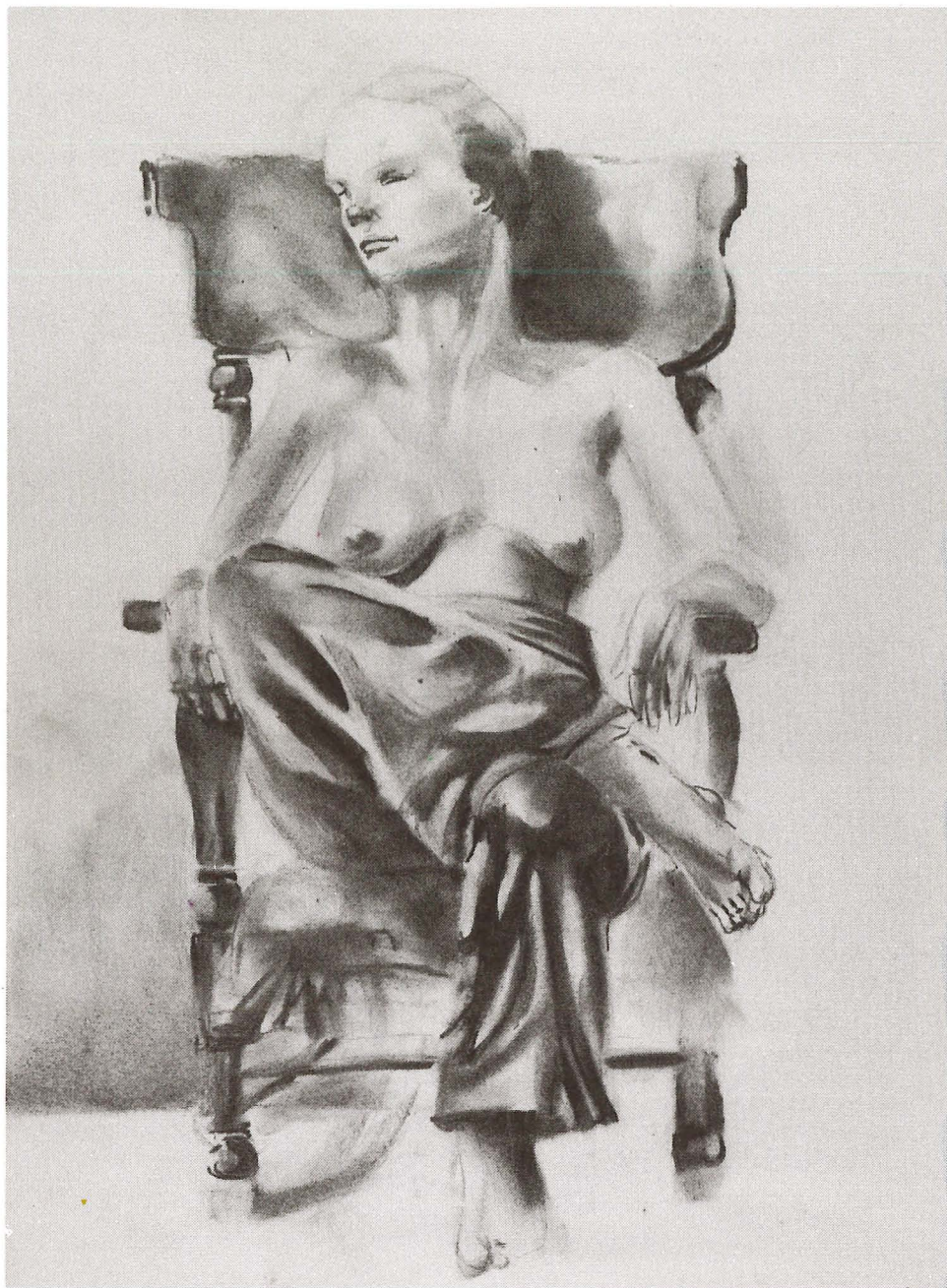


Figure Study

Lonnie Gross



Clown Lithograph

Mary Kay Schwanitz



# Make-believe Lives

By

Tamara Francisco

Snow-sun glitters  
    On the feather-flakes falling.  
Miracles of winter  
    Tumble about.  
Snow-frost etching  
    Seen on every free window.  
Sceneries of mystery  
    Painted at night.  
Snow-wind whistles  
    Sculpting drifts into castles.  
    Tucking in the Prince and  
        Princess of Trees.  
Snow-time magic  
    Is seen only by children.  
Wintertime is one time  
    Make-believe lives.

## behind the scene

by

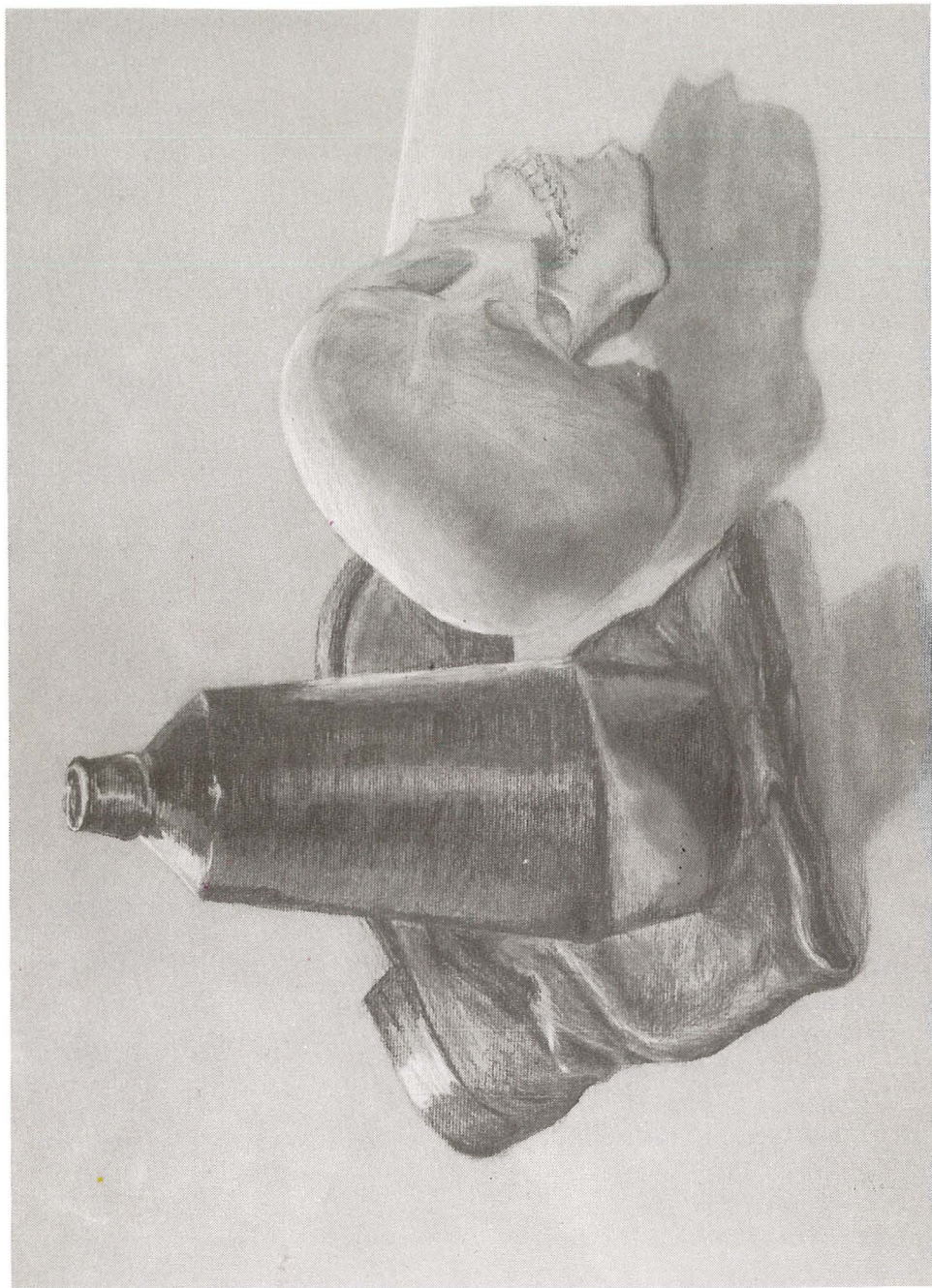
Eric Malooley

i've been turned and twisted  
by powers beyond my grasp  
i've danced in circles  
for reasons unknown.

one day i grew tired  
of blind acceptance  
and ripped off the mask  
only to have another  
fall into place.

then in desperation  
of ages untold  
i reach for the strings  
and climb upward  
to find our Home  
among the smiling faces.





Still Life

Geralin Rhein

# Energy Tune-Up

By

Tom Lees

It was a refreshing October Friday as the sun rose cautiously into the sparkling blue sky. The alarm clock rang and I groggily crawled out of bed. Rubbing the sleep from my eyes, I jumped into my coveralls and headed to the garage to do a pre-flight test on the timing gear of my car. The crisp breeze shot a burst of energy into my veins. The car came to life with the first turn of the key. I propped up the shiny hood and stuck my head inside. For me, there is no natural high, higher than the feeling of traveling the open road in my British Racing Green MGB. How great it will be to eat up the many miles of concrete that lay in front of me on my journey to Michigan State University!

My train of thought was quickly snapped as my wrist touched the now hot manifold. I grimaced and finished the timing. With everything tuned in harmony, I shut the hood and went inside the house to gather some clothes for the weekend ahead. My mother gave me the usual "be careful" and I was on my way.

The open road, my favorite car, and the mellow rumbling of the exhaust; what could be better? As I slid the Beatles into my tape deck, a three ton land yacht silently lurched past. I chuckled at the sight of such obesity and dropped into overdrive. I tried to imagine why anyone would want to drive such an over-stuffed casket. Actually the operator isn't driving the car, the car is driving him. Just point it in the desired direction, push cruise control and he won't be bothered until he reaches his destination.

Enjoy your last miles, big car, for your days are numbered. America can no longer afford to take care of you. It's time to go on a diet, big car. Lose a few thousand pounds and get yourself back into shape. You haven't always been so obese with your over-stated luxury. If you could only thunder through the quarter mile in less than 20 seconds, and get 20 miles to the gallon instead of 20 gallons to the mile, we might have a use for you. But the only use for you now is in an interior decorator's showroom.

I glanced into my rearview mirror only to find the sunglassed face of a plain brown wrapper. "Where did he come from?" I wondered as I moved to the shoulder of the road. I ejected the Beatles and waited as the officer walked confidently up to my car. "What's wrong officer, sir?" I said with wide innocent eyes. "Going a little fast, weren't you, boy?" the officer accused, "77 in a 55 mph zone." "I didn't realize I was going that fast, sir," I countered. "Sure" the officer said, half believing me, as he began scratching out the ticket. He said nothing more and handed me the ticket. It was for a burned out tail-light! I glowed back at the officer and thanked him. "You were breaking the law, son, but I feel that the speed limit shouldn't be set at 55 mph. All this talk of saving lives is true, but where the saving comes in is on the back and country roads." "You read *Road and Track*, too!" I questioned excitedly. "Yes," he answered, "but these are first hand observations. America's highways are the safest in the world and people should be allowed the freedom of mobility they offer". "What about the fact of conserving energy?" I asked bravely. "It does save fuel but this little car of yours isn't half as thirsty as some of the big cars going half the speed." We talked for a few minutes about cars and he said he has a 1969 MGB that he was rebuilding over the winter. He expressed, though, that the 55 mph



speed limit is the law and that I should follow it more closely. I thanked him again and sped off down the highway.

About an hour later, I entered the Michigan State University campus and the thought of the officer faded. I spent a great weekend with many good friends. Sunday came and I decided it was time to head home. I maneuvered myself through the maze of streets and soon found myself on the highway. With the open road came the memory of the officer who had stopped me on the way to MSU. Many questions arose: "Why can't the smaller cars go over 55 mph? Why aren't the "gas-guzzlers" taxed for their weight and for the gas they use? Most accidents happen between larger and smaller cars, therefore, wouldn't it be wise to eliminate the large cars?"

Flashing lights filled my mirror and I glanced down at the speedometer. "Caught again," I sighed. The brown car pulled up next to me and beeped. It was the officer who had pulled me over when I was going the other way. He smiled and sailed by. I chuckled and relaxed back into my seat. What could be better, I thought: the open road, my favorite car, and the mellow rumbling of the exhaust.

"It's what the world is coming to!"

## If I Could Open Up

By

Stephen W. Strobbe

If I could open my brain  
like a can of soup,

turn the key until, for once,  
I finished what was started on the rim,  
and could pry that thin, rough-razor top off  
without slicing a finger,

What would I do with the contents?

Squirm and quiver—  
recoil at the sight of vegetable blood.  
Try hard to reclose tight  
that severed seal—

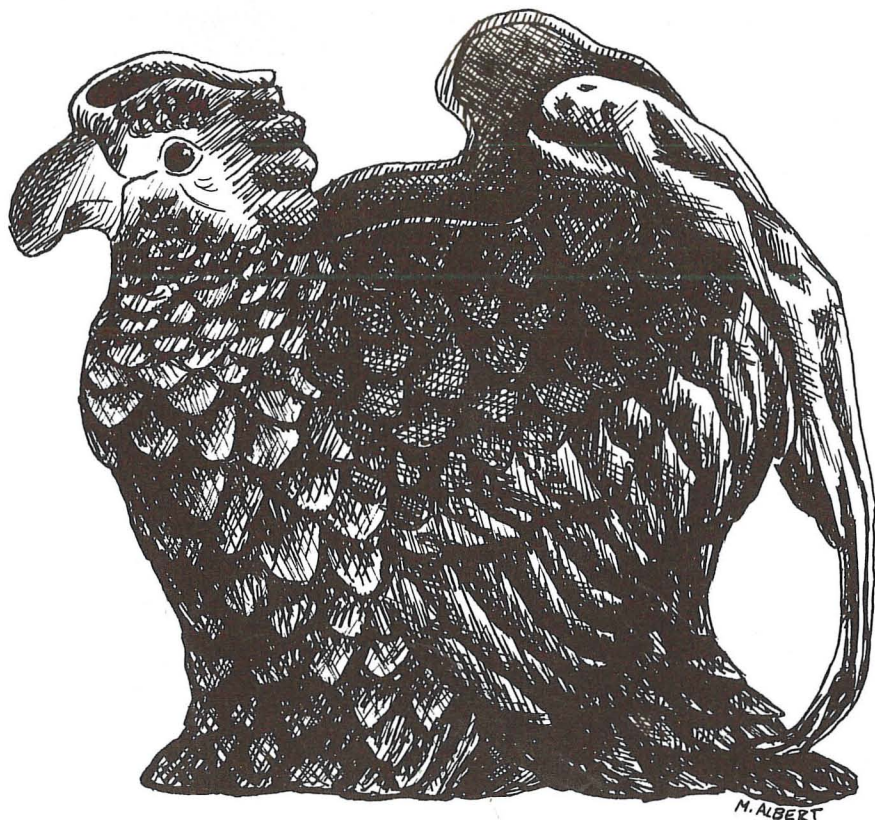
Or throw it on the burner  
in porcelain panned premeditation  
and offer up the meal,

Hoping you would stir the good things up,  
fill a cup,  
blow gently across the top,  
bring the steeping mixture to your lips.

And then,  
despite the sight, the heat,  
would you eat from that?

No matter.  
Nose wrinkled,  
in the throes of doubt,  
I fed it to the cat.





Untitled

Margaret Albert

## HAIKU

By

Pat Francesconi

A dream comes softly,  
Invading the cold darkness  
With tales of color.



Jack-O-Lantern

Cheryl Blake



# Another Autumn

by

Tamara L. Francisco

Charley's cabin was the only dwelling along the narrow and dusty strip of road, and nature's elements often took full advantage of it. As Charley sat on the porch, a cool breeze swept around the house snatching up the many-colored leaves and swiftly scattering them elsewhere. From his sturdy rocker on the open porch Charley saw the leaves; he watched the colored autumn leaves dance and twirl, cyclone style, then stop in mid-air and flutter back to the ground. The air smelled of autumn; it was fresh and fragrant. Charley loved autumn. He loved the way the days were so slow and lazy and quiet, and he enjoyed just rocking and thinking.

A rumbling noise invaded Charley's solitude, and as he looked up from the ground, he saw a dust cloud rapidly rolling down the gravel road. Charley had not seen a cloud like that in a long time. It kept its fast pace, all the while coming closer to his cabin. When the cloud was nearly in front, a car appeared and turned into Charley's drive. The dusty red car had barely stopped when James hopped out grinning.

"Hi Gramps! Well, here she is, my very own car; just got her t'day. Boy, does she ride smooth! And you'd never guess where I found her . . ."

Charley nodded and leaned back in his rocker as James' voice grew faint. He breathed deeply the pleasant aroma, remembering once ago, another autumn, another place . . .

"Mama, Papa, I bought myself an automobile. I'm gonna learn to drive it and go all over the country. Might even take you along with me. I heard it c'n prob'ly go better th'n 40 miles an hour. Ain't it swell!"

But "swell" was not exactly the look their faces beheld. Mama was astounded; Papa was furious.

"Well, if you ask me," Papa snorted, "back when I was young, people had sense enough not t' go riskin' their lives with such foolishness."

Mama nodded in definite agreement. "Imagine! He's actually thinking of **traveling** at that speed. Why, any **horse** with a half ounce of sense wouldn't try it."

"What is this world coming to anyhow? A man can't even feel safe in his own house anymore. Why, t'other day one of them dangblamed contraptions went a-honkin' and a-rumblin' past, nearly shook the glass right out'a the place, scared the team so bad I couldn't touch 'em for 'n hour."

"I really don't even think we're meant to go that fast," Mama offered quietly. "If the good Lord had'a wanted us to . . ."

"Well, all I can say is that any country that'd even **think** of switchin' from strong, reliable horses an' take a chance with them noisy, greasy, cantankerous contraptions is headed down the wrong path; I'll tell you that."

Mama went back to working in the kitchen, and Papa stormed out of the house, but I got my automobile anyhow and parked it right out back where I could see it and touch it and keep it polished all pretty. Gee, she was a



beauty, deep ebony with a finish like glass and chrome shiny as a mirror; and did she ever ride smooth! Why, once I got to driving real good, opened up full speed it practic'ly flew. I surely can say one thing; that old mare of Papa's couldn't never in her life have caught up to me once I got going.

James' voice had gotten loud again. Charley opened his eyes and glanced over at him. "No, James, where'd you get it?"

"Why Mr. Wilkins over at Shady Corners had it bought for his wife, but you know how Mrs. Wilkins never did like to drive. Well, old Mr. Wilkins just decided he'd like someone t' get a little use out'a the car afore it got any older and had t'be sold for scrap, and so he . . ."

The autumn sun was warm as Charley rocked back and forth and watched the leaves . . . .

"Charley, now you be sure and be careful with that foolish automobile of yours." Mama was warning again. "You go too fast and you know it, and one of these days something's gonna happen."

"Yes, Mama."

The road was clear and the cool autumn air whizzed by. It sure felt great. The sides of the road had a lot of holes, but the center was smooth like rock. It was easy as pie to drive there. The wind whipped at my face and stole my breath away as the automobile picked up speed going down the hill. Twenty, twenty-five, thirty. Faster! Faster! Thirty-five, forty. Fantastic! Watch this curve. Oh, no! No brakes! Stop! I have to stop! I'm going to crash! I can't stop! It won't stop! It's crashing! Jump!

The parts and I flew as my automobile jolted through a ditch and part of the way into a field to be stabbed by a fence post. Then it stopped; **my** automobile stopped.

Even yet Charley could see the steaming, wrinkled wreck sitting in the field and the awful on his father's face when he came with the team to drag him out.

Charley opened his eyes and saw James sitting on the porch next to him.

". . . he decided he'd let me have it for next t' nothin'." James whistled. "Oh Gramps, ain't she a beauty, ain't she really something?"

Charley leaned back in his rocker, sighed, and watched the autumn leaves rustle. "Ain't she though."

## blown away

by

Eric Malooley

sails up

first puff sends me

noiselessly skimming

'cross rippling blue

chasing buttery sun

with my love — the wind

at my side.

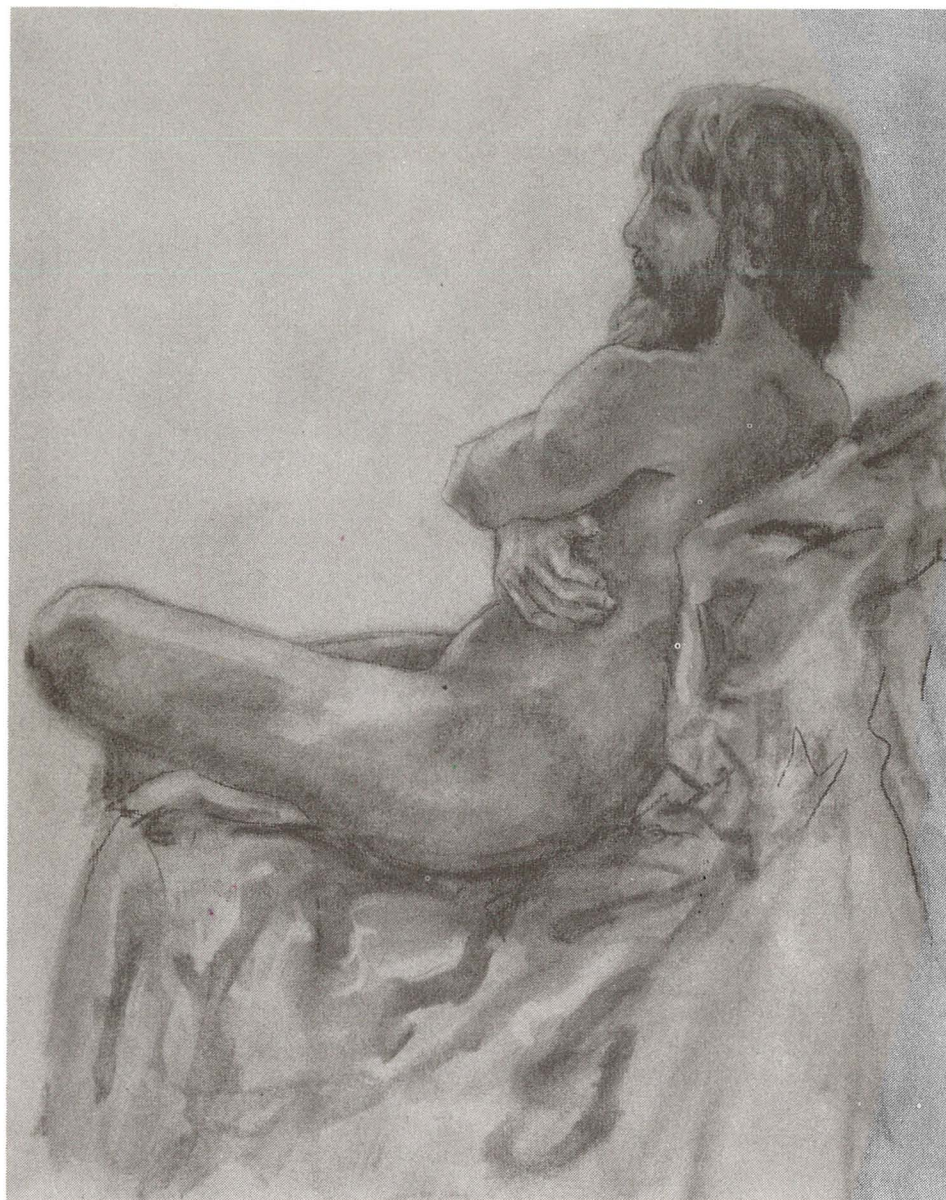
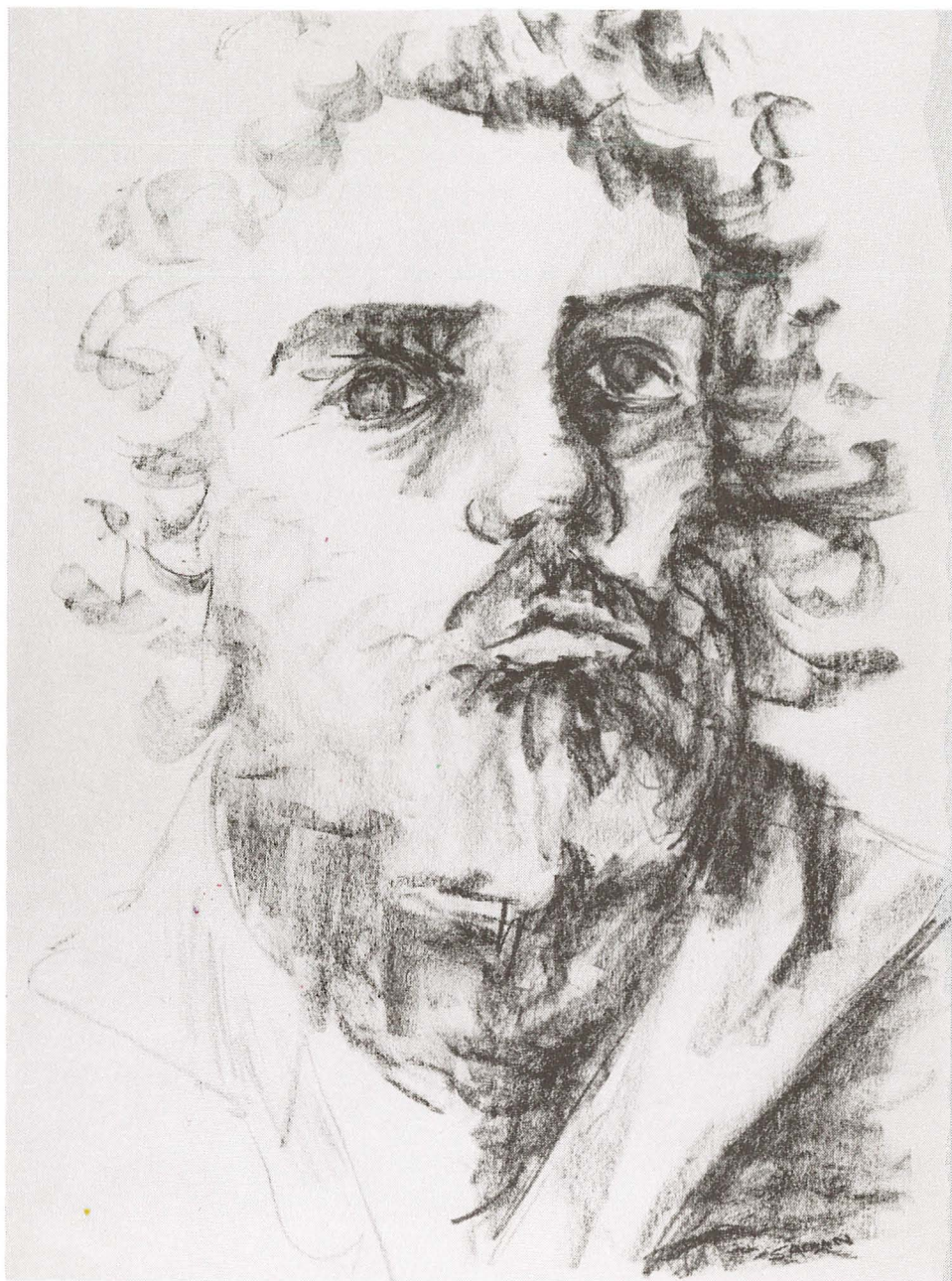


Figure Study

Kathy Wise





Head Study

Salli Alban



# What Makes A Good Teacher Good?

By

Carlos Patrón

Carlos spent a semester at this college as an exchange student from Mexico and wrote this essay as an assignment for his English class. This interesting essay demonstrates his facility in his second language.

As a pupil during my thirteen years of school, I have had not less than forty teachers, some of them two or three times in different years and different subjects, but I especially remember one. His last name is Cardenas, and he taught me physics in my junior year of high school. The course included statics, dynamics and generalities about fluid mechanics. I always liked physics; however, I wasn't very interested in these specific branches. Therefore, I was not excited about the new subject and new teacher.

The first of classes came, and at the beginning, everything seemed to be okay. Following custom, the very first thing he said was, "My name is Mr. X, and now I want you to stand up and tell the class your name and where you come from." After this things changed, and I should say things really did change. He started asking everybody all types of strange, weird questions that, for a while, I thought neither Newton nor Einstein ever knew in their lives, for example:

"Why is it easier to lift a weight with a pulley?"

"Why is it easier to raise a weight using a ramp?"

"Why do the curves on the roads have some degree of inclination?"

"Why do you think a satellite that is in orbit stays in orbit?"

Oh, who knows how to answer these questions? Not me. I was very angry with him because I thought he was trying to show us how ignorant we were, so when my turn came and he asked me, "How come a baseball pitcher can throw a curve? Could you explain that?" I told him, "Who the hell do you think we are? If we knew all these for sure, we would not be in this stupid class. And now let me tell you something. Why do you ask all these hard questions?"

At that moment, we could see the anger in his face and eyes. However, he controlled himself and told me in a very cool voice, "I ask you, and this is not only for him but for everybody in this class. I ask you all this stuff because you are my pupils. As such, you come here to learn and to share knowledge with all your classmates, even me. You might not know the answers now, but believe me, you will by the end of the course. Otherwise, I'll quit teaching."

There is no way I could ever forget these words especially when one considered he would make them reality. During his lecture he would never dictate a law or hypothesis from the book. He would always let us make the definition with our own words. This was possible because everyone read the text before class. He also never got angry because somebody asked him a question outside the book, yet related to the subject; he always would answer it in class, or when he considered there was not enough time in class, he would say to the fellow, "Why don't you go by my office, and we will discuss it more in detail without rushing?" Actually he always asked us this type of question to make us wonder about the practical applications of the theory.

I also remember one occasion when we were dealing with dynamics, specifically with the type of movements that exist. Someone asked him about the relativity theory and he said, "I am afraid that my knowledge in that area of

physics is very limited, actually not enough to answer your question, but what do you think if next Saturday we meet at the library, find some material about the subject, learn all we can about it and then discuss it among us?"

All these little facts and a lot more made this teacher, in my opinion, of course, the best I have ever known.

However, there were some kids in class that thought this was the hardest, most boring class they ever took, but they were the old-fashioned type of students who expected everything from the teacher. They did not want to think at all. They only wanted to take notes, memorize them, and expect a test which only would include the material they had. Furthermore, they hated all types of questions which meant they had to build up their own definition or opinion about the subject.

They are totally wrong. By no means could they ever be better if they want to do what is already done. One has to improve, to think, to question every single thing or fact:

"Is this actually the best thing to do?"

"I wonder in which way could this be improved."

"Is this the only way to make this?"

Education should teach students not only facts and figures, but a good way of joining all their ideas and thoughts in a chain that will lead them to their own definitions and knowledge. It should create in them a delight in the sense of learning. It should teach them to learn by themselves and not to expect every fact from their teacher or their text.

## The Issue

By

Stephen W. Strobbe

The issue is unsettled as a stomach  
with too much or too little to digest  
so it keeps turning over  
like a cold sleeper  
with a short blanket  
who pulls the covers up over a shoulder for warmth  
and exposes his feet.





Still Life

Deborah Ings





Untitled

Michael Pitzer

## "For-Real" feelings

By

Charles Ross

Have you ever felt really used  
Kicked at, frowned on, or abused  
Or angry and full of spite  
Because your skin wasn't white.

It must be a helluva color  
To vote and allow no other  
And never thought you would end it,  
Until hit with a fifteenth amendment.

And what about all the fuss  
You caused Mrs. Parks on the bus.  
Now how could it possibly be  
That you were better than she.

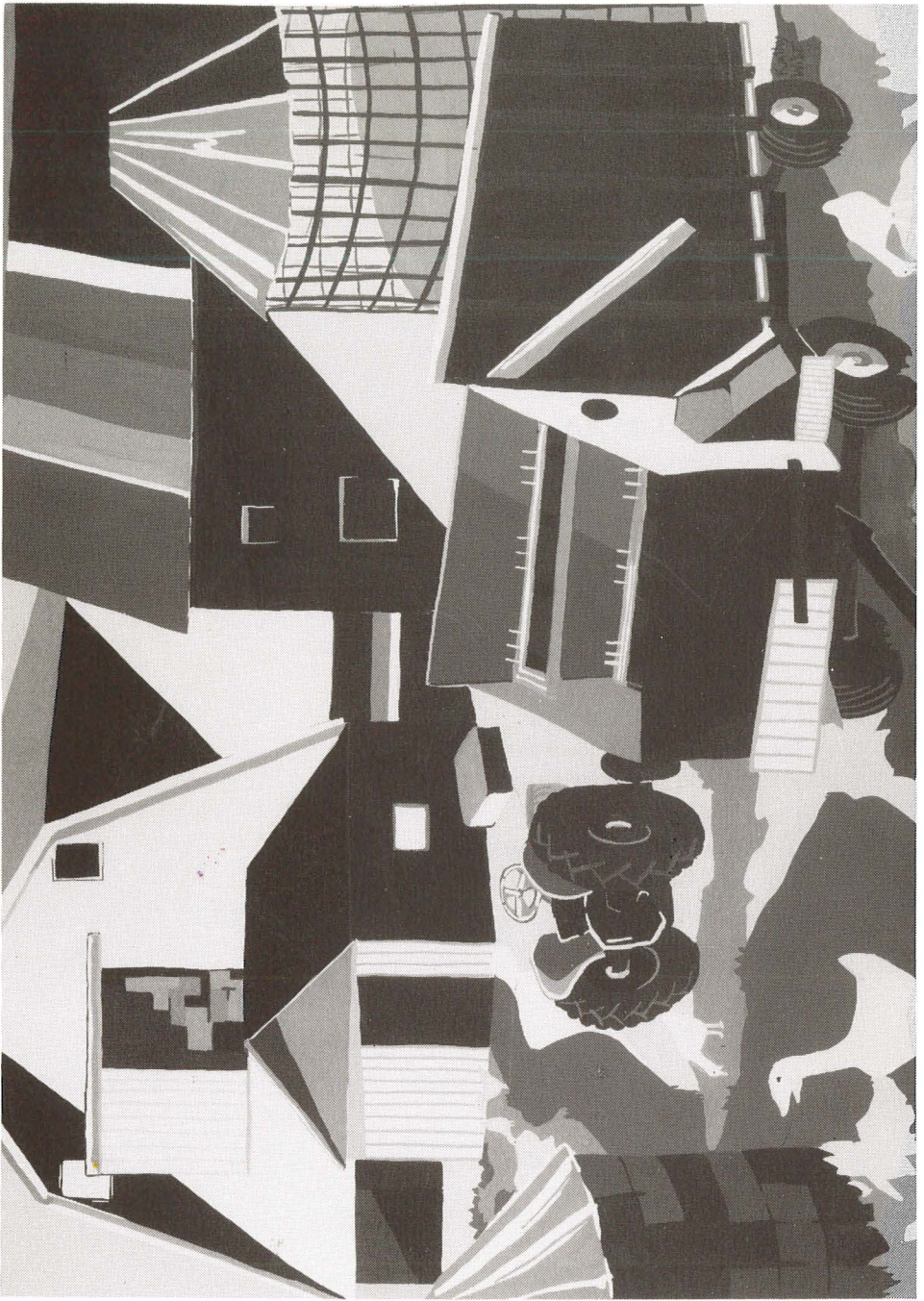
But now it's not really that bad—  
More fun that we ever had.  
We no longer feel like fools  
While attending whitey's school.

And when we go look for a job  
We now cease to feel like slobs  
But when you don't call we figure  
You wrote on our sheet, "He's a Nigger."

I don't let this out all the time  
I just got something brewing inside  
And I doubt if you know what I mean  
Unless you're Black, and saw the film called

**King.**





Farm

Kathy Wise



# Brother Larr

By

J. A. Montgomery

I walked behind  
My brother Larr  
An endless way  
Into the woods

I listened to him  
Play a tune  
His lispng fife  
Led me far

He stopped but I  
Still could hear  
A windless sound  
Water flow

He said to me  
"Stay and sit"  
A singing stream  
Invites a rest

And the Crane flies higher and higher  
Each year. And the desolate sky  
Shall be filled with the immortal.  
And brother Larr shall fly away,  
Fly away brother Larr.

He took my hand  
And gently led me  
To a sky that  
No one knows

He showed me where  
The river comes from  
And where the river flows

We watched the mountains  
Fall below us  
We watched the sky-birds fly

And as we flew through  
Mellow blueness, he said,  
"We will never die"

And the Crane flies higher and higher  
Each year. And the desolate sky  
Shall be filled with the immortal.  
And brother Larr shall fly away,  
He and I shall fly.

## Baker's Dozen

By

Stephen W. Strobbe

Roll them out—  
Babies like cookies  
onto hot sheets,  
flesh soft as dough.

Shape their lives—  
Surely they will be  
perfect as us.  
Scrape the last batch

from the pan.  
We will make just as  
many as we  
possibly can!

ARE THEY READY YET?  
the children cry,  
looking through the glass door,  
expectant as mothers.

ARE THEY READY YET?  
And in spite of  
all the burned and broken  
and deformed ones we've made,

ARE THEY READY YET?

We send them—  
by the dozens, hurled  
into hot ovens,  
which is the world.

## The Acolyte

By

Ann Endelman

Blushing, brushing hair from his eyes,  
He lights the candles, hands slightly shaking.  
Wooden cross on snow-white smock,  
Dirty shoes peeking from beneath long red cassock.  
Mother's heart bursting.





